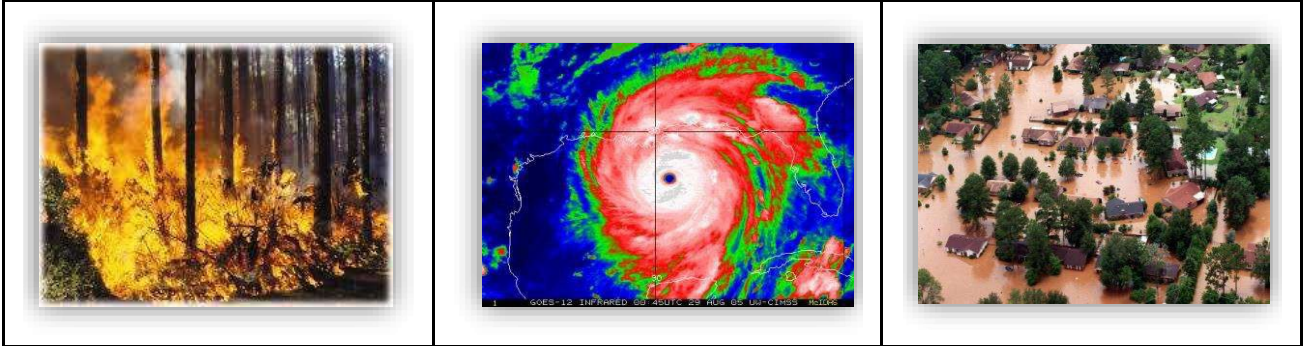


JACKSON COUNTY



Mitigation Element

Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

April 2025

Jackson County Board of County Commissioners
Department of Emergency Management



TABLE OF CONENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION	2
II.	GENERAL	2
	A. Costs to Communities	2
	B. Costs to Local Government	2
	C. Lead/Support Agencies for Mitigation Operations.....	3
III.	CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS	5
	A. Pre-Disaster Operations	5
	B. Community Disaster Education.....	5
	C. Emergency Management Organization System Used During Emergencies ...	6
	D. Coordination of Mitigation Activities with Municipalities and the State.....	6
	E. Mitigation MOUs, Mutual Aid Agreements and/ or Inter Local Agreements.	7
	F. Local Government Participation in the NFIP.....	7
	G. Process for Identifying Mitigation Opportunities	8
	H. Process to Manage Mitigation Assistance Funds	10
IV.	POST-DISASTER MITIGATION FUNCTIONS.....	10
	A. Planning Assumptions	10
	B. Mitigation Assessments	11
	C. Coordination between Lead and Support Agencies.....	13
	D. Resources Necessary for Mitigation Assessments.....	13
	E. Training Procedures for Mitigation Personnel	13
	F. Notification and Activation	13
	G. Mitigation Projects.....	14

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Agency Responsibilities for Hazard Mitigation	3
Figure 2: Mitigation Organizational Chart	4
Figure 3: NFIP/CRS Participation	8

I. INTRODUCTION

Hazard mitigation is any action taken to permanently reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and their property from the effects of hazards. Some examples of hazard mitigation include land use planning techniques that limit infrastructure in high hazard areas and programs for retrofitting existing structures to meet new building codes and standards. Ideally, a community can minimize the effects of future hazards through a mix of code enforcement, education, planning and responsible development. Every community is exposed to some level of risk from hazards. Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, hazardous material spills, fires and sinkholes are some of the hazards experienced by the county.

II. GENERAL

Hazards cannot be eliminated, but it is possible to determine what the hazards are, where the hazards are most severe, and identify local actions that can be taken to reduce the severity of the hazard. For example, we know hurricanes are frequent in Florida. Flooding and wind damage are most severe along the rivers and low-lying areas. Jackson County has over 20% of the county in the 100-year flood plain and has many rivers and streams subject to frequent flooding.

Furthermore, there are incentives to live in lower risk areas. Insurance rates and taxes are usually higher in coastal and riverine areas and lower in inland areas.

According to Florida Rule 27P-22, Jackson County has a Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group that meets annually, more often when needed. The most current 27P-22 approval letter on-file is for year 2024. The LMS meetings are publicized to the public for their input.

A. Costs to Communities

Hazards have real costs to businesses and residents. Businesses in high hazard areas can suffer when damaged or isolated by storms. Residents who build in flood prone areas are subject to evacuation, damage to their homes, lower home values and higher insurance premiums

B. Costs to Local Government

Community infrastructure such as roads, drainage structures, sewer lines, electric lines and telephone lines that are built in high hazard areas are subject to frequent damage and extremely costly repairs. Also, if a local government belongs to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and allows development in the floodplain without proper elevation and construction techniques, the federal government can withdraw the community's access to federal flood insurance for both public and private structures.

Furthermore, local government is responsible for as much as 25 percent of their local public cost of a federally declared disaster and 100 percent of any damage from smaller events that are not declared disasters. These costs can put a significant strain on the local government budget.

C. Lead/Support Agencies for Mitigation Operations

The JCEMA Director or designee has the responsibility for providing management and oversight of both Pre and Post-Disaster Mitigation Operations.

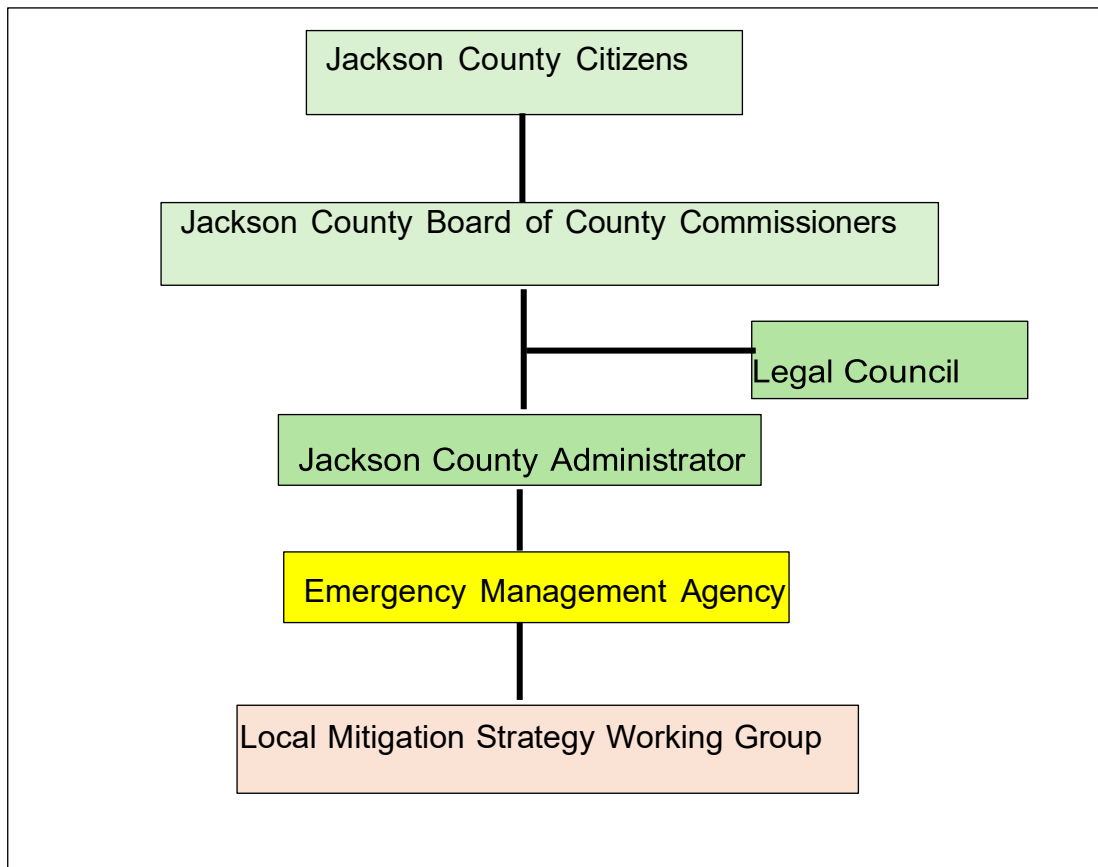
Identified in the following matrix are the lead and support agencies for both Pre and Post-Disaster Mitigation Operations. The matrix also identifies the position by title of the individual responsible for mitigation at each of the listed agencies.

Figure 1: Agency Responsibilities for Hazard Mitigation

Mitigation Operation Matrix Agency/ Department/ Organization				
Key:	Lead Agency		Support Agency	
All Municipalities- Mayor/Administrator			S	S
Chipola College - President			S	S
Electric Companies			S	S
Florida Department of Agriculture - Forestry			S	S
Jackson County Board of Commissioners			S	S
Jackson County Chamber of Commerce			S	S
Jackson County Economic Development and Tourism Dev Council			S	S
Jackson County Grants and Contracts Department			S	S
Jackson County Community Development – Director			S	S
Jackson County Corrections – Chief			S	S
Jackson County Road Department - Director			S	S
Jackson County Fire Rescue - Chief			S	S
Jackson County Emergency Management - Director			L	L
Jackson County Utilities/Parks/Maintenance– Director			S	S
Jackson County Sheriff's Office – Sheriff			S	S
Jackson Hospital – Administrator			S	S
Jackson County Local Mitigation Working Group			S	S

The following is an organizational chart for Jackson County's mitigation efforts. JCEMA will coordinate the overall mitigation actions for the County. The Director of Grants and Contract Management with Jackson County serves as the chair of the Local Mitigation Strategy Committee, and as such, is heavily involved in all aspects of mitigation in Jackson County, in conjunction with JCEMA staff.

Figure 2: Mitigation Organizational Chart



III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

This section of the plan provides an overview of the management of pre-disaster and post-disaster mitigation activities in the county. It provides guidance for the activities necessary for the county to reduce the potential for damage and loss from future disasters affecting the county.

A. Pre-Disaster Operations

Mitigation activities in the pre-disaster environment are the responsibility of the JCEMA.

Coordination of pre-disaster mitigation activities is achieved through the county LMS process. This document identifies:

- The hazards to which the county is vulnerable to
- Assesses the facilities and structures that are most vulnerable to hazards
- Offers a prioritized list of mitigation projects to take advantage of available funding.
- Links mitigation projects to available sources of funding.

The JCEMA is responsible for maintaining the county LMS. The county LMS will be reviewed at least annually, or after each major disaster on an as needed basis. It will be formally updated once every five years. Jackson County has a State and FEMA approved Local Mitigation Strategy which expires on March 15, 2026.

The Jackson County Emergency Management Director works with the Jackson County Local Mitigation Working Group President to coordinate the activities of the LMS Committee, including setting meeting schedules, in conjunction with JCEMA. Together, the LMS Committee and JCEMA manage the mitigation efforts ongoing in Jackson County. The LMS Committee continues to look for opportunities to apply mitigation actions when and where feasible.

B. Community Disaster Education

An important component of mitigating the effects of disasters is to maintain a viable initiative designed to provide valuable disaster preparedness and mitigation information to county residents.

JCEMA has a responsibility to facilitate these activities throughout the county, using the following venues:

- Brochures and flyers
- Community and neighborhood events and presentations (fairs, workshops etc.).
- County web page
- Newspaper articles
- Radio programs
- Social Media

In addition, JCEMA has the responsibility of seeking input from county residents and business owners regarding additional actions that should be taken to improve the disaster readiness and resilience of the county.

Currently the county does not have any ad valorem tax incentives for property owners to retrofit structures to make them more disaster resistant. At the current time there are no specific property zoning classifications regarding disaster mitigation.

C. Emergency Management Organization System Used During Emergencies

The county operates under the ICS system during emergency operations. This system is especially effective for managing response and recovery operations that involve multiple agencies each working on different though inter-related tasks.

The organizational system employed during mitigation activities is streamlined in large part because the JCEMA has the primary responsibility for many aspects of pre-disaster and post-disaster mitigation. Although there are times when the JCEMA receives assistance from supporting agencies, most mitigation activities are carried out directly by the JCEMA and the Jackson County Grants and Contracts Department.

D. Coordination of Mitigation Activities with Municipalities and the State

JCEMA and the Jackson County Grants and Contracts Director are responsible for coordinating mitigation activities with the eleven local jurisdictions within the county. In addition, JCEMA and the Jackson County Grants and Contracts Director has the responsibility of coordinating mitigation activities with FDEM and other Florida agencies.

E. Mitigation MOUs, Mutual Aid Agreements and/ or Inter Local Agreements

JCEMA does have some formal agreements with agencies and organizations to assist in post-disaster mitigation activities. These include:

- Chipola Ministry Center
 - Provide food and clothing for the public.
- Chipola Amateur Radio Club (CARC)
 - Emergency Communications
- City of Marianna
 - Emergency worker base camp.
- Evangel Church
 - If activated, will provide food to EOC workers.
- JTrans
 - Transportation.
- Jackson Hospital
 - Provide a place for limited number of PSN's.
- Marianna Health and Rehab; Graceville Hlth Care, Marianna Nursing Pavilion, Courtyard
 - Transportation, if available.
- Pan-Care
 - Medical/Dental/Behavioral Health.
- RCC
 - Provide food for emergency workers
- School Board
 - Provide shelter, feeding at shelter and EOC for first 72 hours, as well as fuel.
- Sr. Citizens
 - Provide food to EOC workers.

Local agencies and organizations have historically worked together as needed in the aftermath of disasters. In the event a large-scale disaster was to impact Jackson County, JCEMA would reach out via the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement for supplemental assistance.

F. Local Government Participation in the NFIP

The following matrix provides an overview of the current National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the Community Rating System (CRS) participation by the county and the eleven local jurisdictions. The CRS is an adjunct program of the NFIP that offers flood insurance premium discounts for policy holders living in the CRS community. Currently, the unincorporated County residents living in the 100-year flood zone receive a 5% discount if they are in a non-special flood hazard area (SFHA) and a 15% discount if they are in a SFHA1. While none of the municipalities participate in the CRS to date, and therefore do not receive any premium discounts.

¹ Community Rating System can be found at: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1559830308363->

Figure 3: NFIP/CRS Participation – As of October 1, 2024

Jurisdiction	NFIP Participant	CRS Participant	CRS Ranking
Town of Alford	Yes	No	N/A
Town of Bascom	Yes	No	N/A
Town of Campbellton	Yes	No	N/A
City of Cottondale	Yes	No	N/A
City of Graceville	Yes	No	N/A
Town of Grand Ridge	Yes	No	N/A
Town of Greenwood	No	No	N/A
City of Jacob	No	No	N/A
City of Malone	Yes	No	N/A
City of Marianna	Yes	No	N/A
Town Sneads	Yes	No	N/A
Unincorporated Jackson County	Yes	Yes	7

Source: <https://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/community-rating-system#participating>
<https://www.fema.gov/cis/FL.html>

G . Process for Identifying Mitigation Opportunities

Prior to the disaster, the LMS Committee will review the Future Land Use Map² developed by the County and located in the Jackson County Comprehensive Plan (COMP). The Jackson County Building Department will inform the LMS committee of any changes currently underway or planned that could impact the mitigation activities of the County. This could impact the list of mitigation projects identified in the Jackson County LMS.

This function could also identify any conflicts and limitations apparent in the current policies identified in the Jackson County LMS. The LMS Committee will review such conflicts in projects and policies and come up with recommendations to the proper authorities on how to rectify such conflicts. This will be done at the annual review of the LMS project list and mitigation programs.

² Jackson County Future Land Use Map can be found at:

https://arpc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=ce2ba0fD0f1_44aacac3394c9045a5872

County. The LMS Committee will also provide suggestions to JCEMA for inclusion in the County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Also, when feasible, the LMS committee will provide input into new ordinances that have mitigation opportunities available.

The LMS working group reviews applications for mitigation projects that could be added to the LMS Project work list. This list is reviewed, prioritized and voted on annually, however if additional meetings are needed to review applications, they will be set.

As the lead agency for post-disaster mitigation, JCEMA will work closely with the various mitigation support agencies in the post disaster environment to gather the most accurate information on sustained damages. From this information, vulnerabilities to disasters will be assessed and mitigation opportunities identified. Mitigation opportunities are then matched with the prioritized list of mitigation initiatives and funding sources in the county LMS.

Damage assessment information is vital for determining mitigation opportunities, as well as for updating the county's Hazard Vulnerability Analysis (HVA) and the list of prioritized mitigation initiatives in the county LMS. While the JCEMA is the lead agency for coordinating damage assessments, there are several support agencies involved in damage assessment operations. Listed below is a breakdown of agencies involved:

Infrastructure Damage Assessment

- Jackson County Property Appraiser's Office
- Jackson County Public Works
- Jackson County Road Department
- Jackson County Emergency Management Department
- Jackson County Fire Rescue Department
- Jackson County School District
- Jackson County Sheriff's Office
- Jackson County Building Inspection Department
- Jackson County Community Development
- Municipal Public Works
- Volunteer Fire Departments
- Jackson County Chamber of Commerce
- Faith Based Community (Churches)

Home and Business Damage Assessment

- American Red Cross - Central Panhandle Chapter
- Jackson County Building Inspections
- Jackson County Chamber of Commerce
- Jackson County Community Development
- Jackson County's Faith Based Community (Churches)
- Jackson County's Volunteer Fire Departments
- Jackson County Senior Citizen's Association

H. Process to Manage Mitigation Assistance Funds

All mitigation and recovery grants are applied for and received by the JCEMA via the Jackson County Finance Office. The county has previously received and managed a variety of recovery and mitigation grants including CDBG and HMGP which have been used to acquire flood-prone structures, retrofit buildings, control erosion on primary roadways and elevate buildings. The Jackson County Finance Department manages all fiscal components of mitigation projects. Each project is assigned a unique funding code and tracked using the county's centralized financial software. Best practices in public fiscal management—aligned with FDEM and FEMA guidelines—are followed, including:

- Monthly reconciliation of grant and local expenditures
- Documentation of in-kind services and match
- Segregated accounts for each grant to ensure transparency
- Internal audits and grant compliance reviews

The Finance Department coordinates with JCEMA and external auditors to ensure full compliance with 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements). All grant funds will be assigned to a specific account for tracking via the finance department.

IV. POST-DISASTER MITIGATION FUNCTIONS

A. Planning Assumptions

Given the rural nature of the county, personnel resources for daily operations are limited. In the aftermath of a disaster, the limited resources are stretched even further. As a result, the JCEMA relies in large part on the information obtained from the damage assessment activities during the recovery operation to identify specific mitigation priorities following a disaster.

The prioritized project list from the county LMS also serves as a basis for potential mitigation opportunities after a disaster.

The eleven jurisdictions within the county do not have building departments. Therefore, they rely on the JC Building and Inspections Department for all post-disaster mitigation assessment needs for buildings and infrastructure throughout the entire county.

B. Mitigation Assessments

1. Lead and Support Agencies

The JCEMA Director is the primary agency charged with post-disaster mitigation assessment. Sections 11.C.3 and 111.F of this document identify numerous support agencies for the various disaster mitigation activities.

2. Roles and Responsibilities of Lead and Support Agencies

a. JCEMA

The JCEMA Director or designee will serve as the coordinator for all post-disaster mitigation activities. Activities include but are not limited to:

- Notification of all supporting agencies regarding mitigation assessment operations.
- Works with the LMS working group to coordinate all activities associated with identifying potential mitigation projects and initiatives.
- Coordinate the application process for mitigation related grants.
- Serve as the grant administrator for all mitigation grants.
- Provide the Building and Inspection Department with the identification of substantially damaged facilities for All Hazards (including Special Flood Hazard Area) after Initial Damage Assessments and Preliminary Damage Assessments are conducted.
- Coordinates with the Building and Inspection Department to determine the validity, eligibility, and components of potential mitigation projects for substantially damaged facilities located All Hazards (including Special Flood Hazard Area).
- With the assistance of the Administrative Services Director and the Jackson County Clerk's Finance Officer, determine what funding opportunities and/or grants are available for mitigation activities in Jackson County.

b. Administration Grants/Contracts Manager

- Works to find grants and funding opportunities for mitigation activities.
- Coordinate the application process for mitigation related grants.
- Serve as the grant administrator for all county awarded mitigation grants.
- Provides grant information to municipalities through the LMS Working Group.

c. JC Building and Inspection Department

Works closely with JCEMA to determine substantial damage to facilities post disaster in the Special Flood Hazard Area. At the conclusion of each disaster impact period and as soon as safe, all county, municipalities and non-profit agencies/ organizations will conduct a site visit of their facilities and properties to determine the level of damage. The Florida State Division of Emergency Management's Pocket Guides for Public Assistance and Individual Assistance will be used as a guide for assessing damages to facilities and structures. This information will be submitted to the JCEMA for analysis and inclusion in the Initial Damage Assessment.

The Community Development Director is the Floodplain Administrator who will work in coordination with the Building Official. As per Code of Ordinances, Sec 24-1(103.4) the Building Official shall:

- Estimate the market value, or require the applicant to obtain an appraisal of the market value prepared by a qualified independent appraiser, of the building or structure before the start of construction of the proposed work; in the case of repair, the market value of the building or structure shall be the market value before the damage occurred and before any repairs are made;
- Compare the cost to perform the improvement, the cost to repair a damaged building to its pre-damaged condition, or the combined costs of improvements and repairs, if applicable, to the market value of the building or structure;
- Determine and document whether the proposed work constitutes substantial improvement or repair of substantial damage; and
- Notify the applicant if it is determined that the work constitutes substantial improvement or repair of substantial damage and that compliance with the flood resistant construction requirements of the Florida Building Code and this ordinance is required.

d. Road Department

The JCRD will assist the JCEMA in identifying potential road, bridge and culvert mitigation projects.

e. County and Municipal Public Works Departments

Each jurisdictions water and sewer department will assist the JCEMA in identifying possible mitigation projects for water and sewer infrastructure.

f. Volunteer Fire Departments

Because the VFDs are located throughout the county they provide invaluable points of contact for segments of the community affected by the disaster, therefore providing excellent sources of information regarding community needs on a countywide basis.

C. Coordination between Lead and Support Agencies

The JCEMA will serve as the organization responsible for coordinating mitigation activities for lead and support agencies.

The JCEMA Director or designee is the person responsible for this task. The process of coordination is straightforward given the rural nature of the county and the small number of agencies actively involved in post-disaster mitigation activities.

D. Resources Necessary for Mitigation Assessments

The JCEMA will be responsible for ensuring all resources necessary for mitigation assessment are available when needed. Vehicles used for mitigation assessment include city and county government vehicles, VFD vehicles and POVs. The following resources will be provided by the JCEMA to facilitate mitigation assessment:

- Office supplies
- Maps

The above resources are available at the Jackson County EOC. Other resources may be requested on an as needed basis through JCEMA.

E. Training Procedures for Mitigation Personnel

JCEMA actively supports and encourages training for all personnel involved in any disaster mitigation role. These courses are available through the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM), and the Apalachee Local Emergency Planning Council (ALEPC). In addition, JCEMA encourages participation in FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI) - Independent Study Program courses that can be facilitated via the internet. There are a host of mitigation courses available online that interested stakeholders can take advantage of. JCEMA encourages all members of the LMS Committee to take advantage of such training opportunities.

F. Notification and Activation

JCEMA is responsible for notifying and activating all agencies and organizations with a role in disaster mitigation. This will be accomplished via:

- Alert Jackson
- E-Mail
- Phone call

G. Mitigation Projects

The Jackson County LMS details many potential mitigation projects. Many of these projects are dependent on post-disaster mitigation funds, and others are conducted with current funds. In either case, the entity sponsoring the project is responsible for the overall management of the project if it is funded, and work commences. The LMS Committee will determine which projects will be funded using post disaster mitigation grant awards.

Once that is determined, the entity owning the project will shepherd the project from cradle to grave. If there are resources needed to follow through with the project, it should be noted on the application. This will include securing the required match funding, preparing the necessary reports, securing any necessary resources needed to implement and administer the project, working with the Finance Office to secure the proper contracts, and more. This will continue until the project is completed, and the grant is closed out.

A major impediment to implementing mitigation projects is the availability of local match funds because Jackson County is fiscally constrained. Jackson County will work to identify other means of meeting the match requirements, such as the use of global matches, in-kind force accounts, or any other potential source of funding. Large scale mitigation projects for existing buildings and infrastructure along with future buildings and infrastructure are not addressed due to being a fiscally constraint county. However, if grant money is found to support the match for those types of structures, it will be addresses.

On an ongoing basis, the status of each project is reviewed at the annual meeting of the LMS Committee. At that time, the project list is updated, for projects that have been completed, or are no longer viable. JCEMA oversees mitigation project implementation using a structured lifecycle approach: initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, and closeout. Each funded project will be managed under a formal project plan that includes scope, schedule, milestones, and compliance tracking. The county utilizes standardized templates and FEMA Project Worksheets (PWs) to maintain consistency. JCEMA works closely with municipal partners and county departments to ensure timely delivery and stakeholder coordination.